

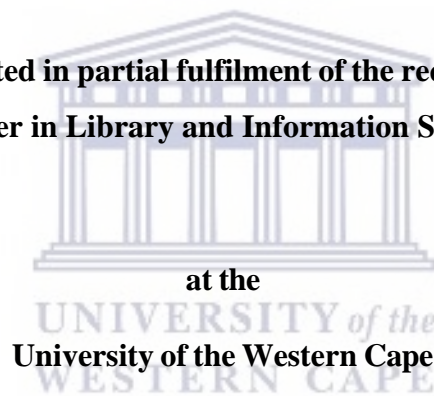
**RECORDS MANAGEMENT AS A CONSTITUENT OF CORPORATE
GOVERNANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: A CASE STUDY OF
WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY**

by

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**A mini dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master in Library and Information Science**



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ABSTRACT

Records management promotes good corporate governance, as it ensures that an institution such as a university is effectively and efficiently governed and accountable to its stakeholders, which include students, staff, board members, and the community it serves. Walter Sisulu University (WSU) has been plagued by poor governance, which has resulted in the institution being placed under administration. Proper records management might have assisted the institution in efficiently managing its information, fulfilling its mandate, protecting itself from litigation, preserving corporate memory, and fostering accountability and good governance. Transparency and accountability can only be achieved if there is a policy that guides the management of records. Moreover, the principles of good corporate governance, such as accountability, transparency, and legislation are ensured by the availability of records. Poor record-keeping practices could result in ineffectiveness and inefficiency in service delivery.

The study sought to examine the role of records management in corporate governance at WSU and the relationship between records management and corporate governance. The study used the survey data collection method, with a questionnaire as the data collection instrument/tool. The study targeted both academic support staff, which included exams and admissions officers: governance and administrative support staff (the registrar, legal staff, the secretariat, and records management staff); and members of the human resources department and the finance department. In total, twenty-six participants were purposively selected as respondents to the questionnaire.

The findings of the study revealed that although WSU has strategies and mechanisms in place for records management, such as a records management policy; standard operating procedures and a records management committee, many staff members are not aware of them. In addition, the study highlighted the link between records management and corporate governance, which is demonstrated by the admission of respondents that WSU needed to be transparent and accountable. The study revealed a lack of stakeholder inclusiveness in records management, although, in terms of legislation on records management and governance, the results showed that WSU complies. Moreover, the study revealed that the security of records was a concern for some respondents.

The recommendation was that the WSU records management unit should conduct an awareness campaign on the University's records management policy, strategies, procedures, and committee to make them known throughout the university and by stakeholders. Furthermore, the study recommended that WSU stakeholders be involved to further good corporate governance practices.

The study concluded that an effective records management programme can improve transparency and accountability in an organisation, which would lead to good corporate governance. In other words, good corporate governance cannot be achieved unless proper structures for sound records management are implemented.


Keywords: records management, corporate governance, accountability, transparency, Walter Sisulu University



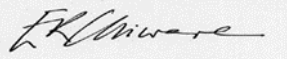
DECLARATION

I declare that the work entitled *RECORDS MANAGEMENT AS A CONSTITUENT OF CORPORATE GOVERNMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: A CASE STUDY OF WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY (WSU)* is my work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged using complete references.

Gugulethu Ndenge

Signed  Date: 12 November 2022

Supervisor: Prof. Elisha Chiware

Signed  Date 12 November 2022



DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my wonderful wife, Nyamie, and our amazing children, Nathi and Vika, who supported, encouraged, and prayed for me throughout my studies. This would not have been possible without your help; this historic accomplishment belongs to us all. Your belief in me and your love made it possible for me to embark on this journey.



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AS	Australian Standard
EDRMS	electronic document and records management system
IoDSA	Institute of Directors in Southern Africa
IRMT	International Records Management Trust
ISO	International Standard Organisation
MLIS	Master in Library and Information Science
NARSSA	National Archives and Records Services of South Africa
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAIA	Promotion of Access to Information Act
POPIA	Protection of Personal Information Act
RM	records management
RAM	Records and archives management
RMS	records management systems
UWC	University of the Western Cape
WSU	Walter Sisulu University

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The enhancement of the corporate governance of higher education institutions through the management of information has become a research topic of interest. This is because institutions of higher education are expected to be transparent and accountable to their stakeholders, including funders, students, staff, the community, and industry, to whom information should be made available. Therefore, records need to be effectively managed, authentic, and reliable to ensure that stakeholders are fully informed and promote good corporate governance.

Numerous government legislative frameworks demand that higher education institutions and the public and private sectors are transparent and accountable, which is made possible through the use of efficient records management strategies and mechanisms (Appiah et al., 2017, p. 42). Moreover, as institutions of higher learning enhance the welfare of citizens by promoting education, which ensures livelihoods, they need to be effectively governed.

1.2 Background of the study

At the beginning of the new millennium, South Africa began the restructuring of the higher education sector to break down apartheid's racial divides and transform education (Seepe 2010). The post-1994 government implemented a merger of higher education institutions in South Africa to ensure access to quality education for all. It also hoped to improve the financial situation of struggling higher education institutions. According to Mohuba et al. (2016), the motive for the merger of higher education institutions was to create an even playing field and eradicate apartheid-era inequalities. The idea of merging these institutions made economic sense, although it had there were setbacks and obstacles, and most merged institutions of higher education institutions failed to make a meaningful impact (Mohuba et al., 2016). In addition, some of the merged institutions were put under administration owing to leadership and governance challenges (Staff Reporter, 2011, p.). Dibetle (2008) highlights some of the challenges brought on by the merger:

- The so-called traditional apartheid universities remained untouched and were able to maintain the apartheid status quo.

- The changing of technikons to become universities caused a skills shortage crisis in the country.
- Having a faculty-based campus policy forced students to be unable to study at their nearest facilities.

Dibetle concluded that the government had failed in its distribution of access to higher education and had to account for this and stop blaming its wrongdoing on apartheid. According to Arnolds et al. (2013), the improvement of the administrative governance of higher education institutions was also part of the democratic agenda. Gillard et al. (2012) highlight the successes of the merger of some of the institutions that were part of the restructuring process. The successes were the following:

- Some institutions gained a strong new identity.
- The merger provided access to funds for upgrading and new buildings.
- Admissions criteria and conditions of service have been revised.

Walter Sisulu University (WSU) was established in terms of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 as amended (South Africa, 1997). WSU, which came into existence on 1 July 2005, is a comprehensive university resulting from the merger of the University of the Transkei (Unitra), the Border Technikon, and the Eastern Cape Technikon. It was named in honour of an icon and prominent figure of the South African liberation struggle, Walter Sisulu (Walter Sisulu University, 2021). It is in Mthatha, East London (Buffalo City), Butterworth and Komani (Queenstown) in the province of the Eastern Cape, South Africa.

According to Seepe (2010), the merger of higher institutions was meant to consider the mechanics, strategies, and tactics that should be undertaken to integrate and harmonise the administrative structures and policies of the merged institutions and to craft those suitable for the new institution. One of the goals of merging the institutions was to create new identities and cultures consistent with the vision, values, and principles of a non-racial and non-sexist, democratic society and to transform them into effective and efficient institutions, which are responsive and contribute to the changing intellectual skills and knowledge needs of South Africa.

After the merger, WSU was faced with the challenge of maintaining functionality and keep the best records from each institution while creating a single administrative service. Kaczmarek (2006) maintains that without a good records management programme, an institution creates

unnecessary risks for itself when its records creation, storage, retrieval, and dissemination are inconsistent. Furthermore, Kaczmarek (2006) maintains that even in the presence of legal mandates, institutional policies, real or threatened litigation, and frequent news stories involving improper destruction or the unauthorised release of records, minimal support for records management continues to be the norm in colleges and universities.

1.3 Research problem

The problem is that if higher institutions do not manage their records effectively, corporate governance might be negatively affected. However, as Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005), Musembe (2016) and Seniwoliba et al. (2017) maintain that good records management would assist universities to manage their information efficiently, thereby having adequate documentation when facing lawsuits, preserving the corporate memory, fostering transparency and accountability toward stakeholders, and ensuring effective corporate governance. to enhance effective and efficient governance.

Walter Sisulu University was placed under administration after the assessment done by the Higher Education and Training Department. Poor governance (inefficient running of the University) was amongst the listed weaknesses (Staff Reporter, 2011, p 1). The poor governance of the WSU forced the minister to implement Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997 section 38K directives that mandate the minister to appoint an administrator after consultation with the board of the National Institute of Higher Education to take over the governance of a troubled institution. (South Africa, 1997). The role of the administrator would be to strengthen structures, systems, and policies to ensure good governance and restore the academic credibility, reliability, and dependability of the problematic university.

1.4 Research objectives

The objectives of this study were to do the following:

- Determine the strategies and mechanisms in place at WSU to manage records
- Determine the records management policies and standard operating procedures that support the effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of corporate governance at WSU
- Determine the relationship between records management and corporate governance at WSU.

1.5 Research questions

The research questions for the current study were as follows:

- What strategies and mechanisms are in place at WSU to manage records?
- What records management policies and standard operating procedures support the effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of corporate governance at WSU?
- What is the relationship between records management and corporate governance at WSU?

1.6 Theoretical framework

Although there are various records management theories, the records continuum theory and stakeholder theory were used as the theoretical framework for the study. The well-organised and active use of these theories might impact positively all spheres of an organisation's governance. According to Ngulube (2003), most organisations fail to base their records management practices on existing theories of records management.

1.7 Literature review

The literature review provided an overview of the related literature on records management and corporate governance in universities and insight into the concepts and the relationship between recordkeeping and corporate governance. Moreover, a review of the literature led to an understanding of the legislative framework governing records management in South Africa.

1.8 Research design and methodology

A research design is a plan indicating the methodology used for collecting, analysing, interpreting, and reporting data in a study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 58). Ngulube (2005, p. 128) states, "key elements of a research design are defining the population and how it was obtained, sampling procedures, instrumentation used, procedures employed in gathering and processing data and the statistical treatment of the data". For the purpose of this study a quantitative research design was chosen whereby a research methodology using data in the form of numbers and statistics would be followed to answer the research questions.

The study used the survey research method to examine the relationship between records management and corporate governance at WSU. Therefore, quantitative data were gathered, which according to Burns (2000, p. 43) involves gathering information in the form of numbers

that are statistically analysed and presented as graphs and tables. The results of quantitative data analysis can be generalised to the general population, which could use the resultant recommendations (Fleetwood, 2020).

1.8.1 Demarcation of the study

The research site was the WSU, which has four campuses spread throughout the eastern part of the Eastern Cape in East London, Butterworth also known as Ibika, Mthatha, and Queenstown (the Whittlesea campus). In addition, these four campuses have multiple sites.

1.8.2 Sampling

The study utilised purposive sampling in choosing its respondents. According to Battaglia (2011), purposive sampling leads to a sample that can be reasonably assumed to be representative of the overall population. A purposive sampling method is a judgemental form of sampling. In other words, the researcher handpicked respondents based on their knowledge of the given population and their understanding of the subject being studied. Therefore, he focused mainly on the people who dealt with the management and care of records in the institution under study.

The study targeted administrative employees at WSU. Therefore, the purposive/judgemental sampling led to the selection of 26 administrators from various departments: the registrar's office (1); the examinations office (8); the admissions office (8); the legal division (1); the secretariat (1); records management (1); the human resources department (3); and the finance department (3).

1.8.3 Data collection

The study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced the country into what was termed "a new normal". Most businesses, including higher institutions were forced to close operations. As the instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire sent via emails to purposively selected participants, the study should not have been affected by the lockdown. Nevertheless, most of the respondents were unable to work remotely and, therefore, not able to access their work mail or were reluctant to participate, as a result, this impacted the study negatively in collecting data. Therefore, the researcher decided to use a second attempt by approaching a personal contact to administer the questionnaire through a drop-and-pick-up method and collect the completed document at an agreed time and then return the questionnaire

to the researcher via email. Some were handwritten and scan back via email directly to the researcher.

1.8.4 Data analysis techniques

A Microsoft Excel spreadsheet was used to organise, analyse, and present the quantitative data gathered from the participants' responses to the closed-ended questions in the self-administered questionnaire.

1.9 Limitations of the study

This study had limitations, which might affect the extent to which generalisations and conclusions can be made. For example, the study focused on WSU and did not cover other South African institutions of higher education. A survey addressing more higher education institutions would give additional depth to the study, although the scope might be too broad. Nevertheless, because of time restraints, it was not possible to research several higher education institutions. Moreover, not all administrative personnel would participate in the study.

1.10 Rationale for and significance of the study

The rationale for and significance of the study is that, as revealed by the literature review, not much has been written about the important role played by records management in ensuring corporate governance. However, good records management is a determinant of good corporate governance because it ensures all information is available to stakeholders, thereby ensuring transparency and accountability of an organisation, such as a higher education institution. Therefore, the study aimed to determine the relationship between corporate governance and records management in the context of WSU, an institution of higher education, which had been accused of poor corporate governance. The study might encourage decision-makers to ensure that corporate records are effectively managed.

1.11 Ethical considerations

The researcher abided by the ethical rules of the UWC throughout the study. Consent to conduct the research was obtained from WSU authorities before the start of the empirical research (See Appendix D). The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were respected. Moreover, the participants' permission was requested before data collection (See Appendix E).

1.12 Definitions of terms

The following terms are defined to help the reader understand the meaning of each term used throughout the study.

1.12.1 Corporate governance

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (1999) defines corporate governance as the method or system by which institutions are administered and controlled.

1.12.2 Record

The International Standard Organisation (ISO) 15489 (2016), which is the standard for records management systems (RMS) defines a record as “information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or the transaction of business”.

1.12.3 Recordkeeping

Recordkeeping is defined by the (Government of South Australia, 1996) as “the making and maintaining of complete, accurate and reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information”.

1.12.4 Records management

The International Standard Organisation (ISO 15489, 2016, p. 1) describes a record as “information created, received and maintained as evidence by an organisation or person in the transaction of business, or the pursuance of a legal obligation, regardless of media”.

1.13 Structure of the mini dissertation

The mini dissertation is divided into six chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction to the study

This chapter provides introductory information and background information to the study, a statement of the problem, the objectives of the study and research questions, and a brief outline of the methodology.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter deals with the theoretical foundation of the study and its impact on records management and corporate governance in higher institutions. It also explores and analyses studies in the field of records management and corporate governance in higher education institutions.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

This chapter describes the research design and methodology of the quantitative study and explains the data collection and instrument, the questionnaire used. Moreover, it outlines the data analysis using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

Chapter 4: Presentation and interpretation of data analysis results

This chapter presents and interprets the results of the data analysis and links them with the research questions.

Chapter 5: Discussion of the findings

This chapter discusses the results presented and interpreted in Chapter 4 and indicates the extent to which they support the research presented in the literature review.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter provides a summary of the results in light of the research questions and literature review findings. In addition, the chapter also makes recommendations for policy, practice and research and identifies the contributions and limitations of the study and makes recommendations for further research.

1.14 Summary

This chapter opened with the background of the study and described the field of records management and its relationship with corporate governance in a higher education institution. This was followed by statements about the objectives of the study, the research questions, the theoretical framework, the literature review, the research design and methodology, the limitations of the study, and the key terms used in the dissertation. The chapter ended with the structure of the thesis.

The next chapter focuses on the relevant literature, examines it, and finds the gaps. In addition, the chapter explains the conceptual framework of the study and clarifies issues raised in the introduction and background sections.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A literature review assists in the framing of research questions, as it ascertains what has been researched before the proposed study Kemoni (2008). Snyder (2019) defines a literature review as a research process that is a systematic method of collecting and synthesising previous research to solve a research problem. Furthermore, Snyder (2019) asserts that a literature review may be the best methodological tool to provide answers to research questions and are useful in all disciplines. Kemoni (2008) argues that literature reviews must be critical, including relevant theories and elaborate on how the current research relates to previously published studies.

This chapter provides an analytical evaluation of scholarly views on records management in higher education institutions. The chapter also highlights and explains two theoretical models of records management: the records continuum model and the stakeholder theory, which framed the study. In addition, the chapter highlights the challenges faced by higher education institutions identified in the literature and their impact on records management and corporate governance. Lastly, the chapter considers the legislative environment that governs records management in South African higher educational institutions to ensure effective governance.

The literature from South African studies is emphasised in this chapter, although, according to Momoti and King (2020), who conducted a study of records management in the university context, the literature on this is limited. Moreover, Momoti and King's (2020) study titled *A records management model for an intelligent university*, revealed that there are only two studies that highlight the role of records management in South African higher education institutions, which indicates a gap in the literature, which the current study filled. However, this chapter explains the literature from other countries for insight into trends in other higher education environments concerning records management.

As university records grow rapidly, the management of records becomes complex, which means that a proactive, reliable, and comprehensive approach to managing records is required. Moreover, universities are also under pressure to comply with legislation and demonstrate their transparency, accountability, and good corporate governance.

2.2 Theoretical framework

As organisations have increased their requirements for maintaining reliable evidence, records management has evolved to ensure the keeping of reliable and trustworthy records (Willis, 2005). However, records management is governed by the standards and needs of the organisation that it supports, which may change over time and altered structures, such as a merger, which may lead to inadequate records management, especially if the complexity and volume of records make them unwieldy. Therefore, theoretical foundations need to be built to guide new records management strategies., such as Upward's Records Continuum Model (Spiteri 2012) and Edward's Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 2019), which the current study used in its investigation of records management at WSU.

2.2.1 *The Records Continuum Model*

The records continuum model was developed by Frank Upward (Spiteri, 2012) owing to the digitisation of records in the 1990s, which changed records management. According to Mckemmish (2001), the records continuum model focuses on the goal shared by all recordkeeping professionals, which is to provide structures for accountable recordkeeping that enables access to essential, useful evidence in business, social, and cultural contexts. The records continuum model is defined as a consistent and logical regime of management processes from the time of the creation of the records through to their preservation and use of archives (Spiteri 2012).

In their studies Lappin et al. (2021) and Spiteri (2012) highlighted the four dimensions of Upward's continuum model:

- Create – regardless of retention periods whereby records are utilised for transactional, evidential, and memory functions and should be managed by a unified strategy for archiving or recordkeeping.
- Capture – records are captured as logical rather than physical entities, whether on paper or electronically.
- Organise – the profession of recordkeeping must integrate recordkeeping into organisational and societal procedures and aims.
- Pluralise - records are reused and re-presented for new uses, audiences, and meanings.

Spiteri (2012) divides these dimensions of the records continuum model into four axes, with each axis indicating activities happening in each dimension. The axes of the continuum are

proof, recordkeeping, transactionality, and identity, all of which are designed to work together and have close mutual ties. Figure 1 below demonstrates the four dimensions of the records continuum model: create, capture, pluralise and organise with each dimension presenting recordkeeping activities happening within that dimension.

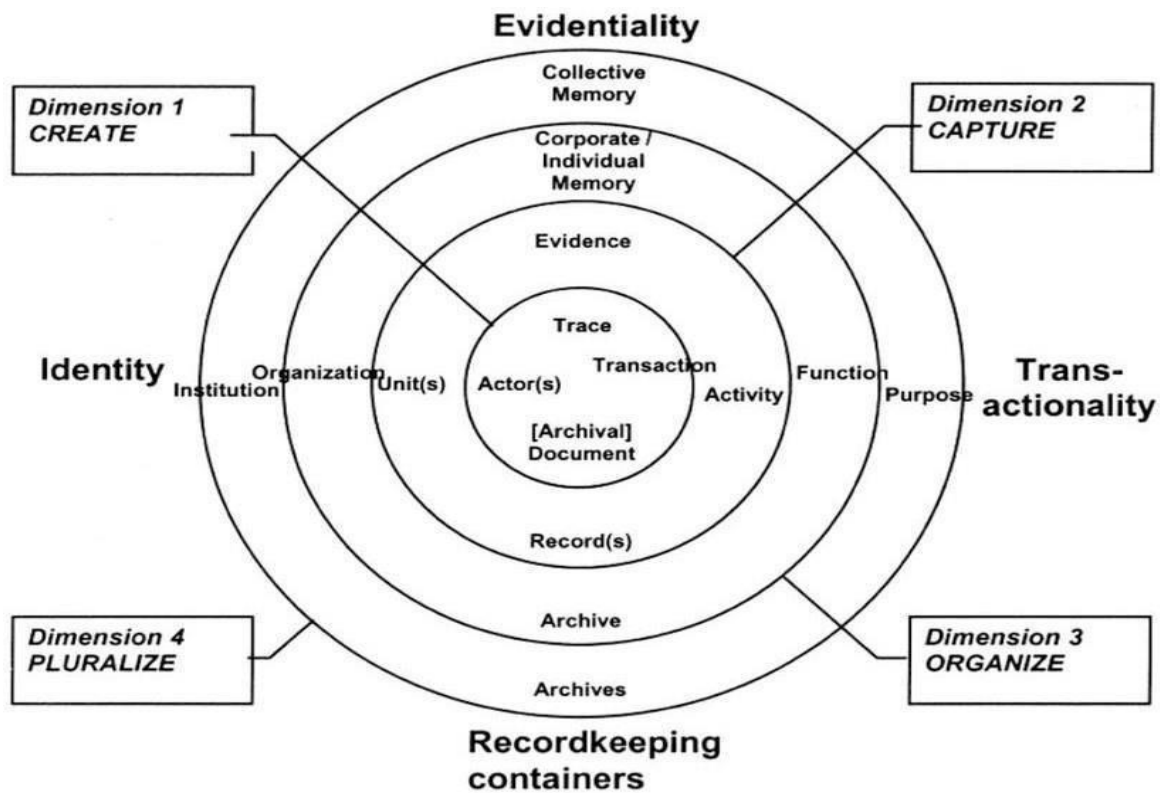


Figure 2.1: The Records Continuum Model

Source: Upward (2000, pp. 123)

Soyka (2015) indicates that these axes represent different facets of accountability, the identity of the entity involved in a transaction documented by the records, what that entity did, what the records provide evidence of, and how the records are found and retrieved for later use.

The records continuum theory is viewed by some authors (Spiteri, 2012; Lappin et al., 2021 & Mckemmish, 2001) as a universal model, but Karabinos (2018) believes that is only relevant to archives, although it has some limitations even there. Karabinos (2018) believes that the model is not suitable to explain the history of migrated archives owing to its reliance on pluralisation and the principle of openness and accessibility. He asserts that the records continuum model is incapable of analysing what is unknown even if it exists. Therefore, he concludes that the widely used records continuum model connects societies and situations where access to information and pluralisation are ensured. Karabinos (2018) proposes a shadow

continuum, which refers to records that no one is aware of and there is no physical trace of their existence. According to Frings-Hessami (2020), Karabino's concept of the shadow continuum is based on a misinterpretation of the characteristics of the records continuum model, and the addition of a shadow continuum is not necessary because the model can be applied even if records have not been made public. The continuum model is the best practice for managing both electronic and hard copy records when the aim is to increase effectiveness, and efficiency and improve responsiveness to stakeholders' requirements.

The records continuum model guided the researcher to understand how records are created, captured, and organised at WSU and as well as the conduct of administrators when dealing with records.

2.2.2 The Stakeholder Theory

The stakeholder theory was introduced by R. Edward Freeman in his publication of *Strategic management: a stakeholder approach* (Freeman, 2010). According to Key (1999), Freeman was the first scholar to present a model evaluating the role players in the organisational environment. The stakeholder theory emphasises the interrelatedness between an organisation and all those who have a stake in it, i.e., employees, customers, community, suppliers, and investors (Bhasin, 2020). In other words, Freeman's model serves stakeholders, not shareholders. The stakeholder theory recommends that an organisation must capitalise on value for its stakeholders.

The stakeholder theory views the business organisation as a component of a larger social body and not a stand-alone entity. The business organisation has responsibilities to its community other than its owners. It impacts the lives of people like customers and especially employees, who are dependent on the organisation (Bhasin, 2020). Principle 16 of The King Report IV stipulates that organisations in their implementation of governance roles and responsibilities should adopt a stakeholder's inclusive approach that incorporates the needs, interests, and prospects of stakeholders, which would be in the best interests of the organisations over time (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa [IoDSA], 2016).

According to Alves et al. (2010), Freeman's resulted from an organisational setting where there was an acknowledgement that organisations were not efficient and that their survival depended on relationships with interest groups, both internally and externally. Figure 2 below illustrates

the unified connection between an organisation and its stakeholders in terms of the ethics and morals of running the organisation.

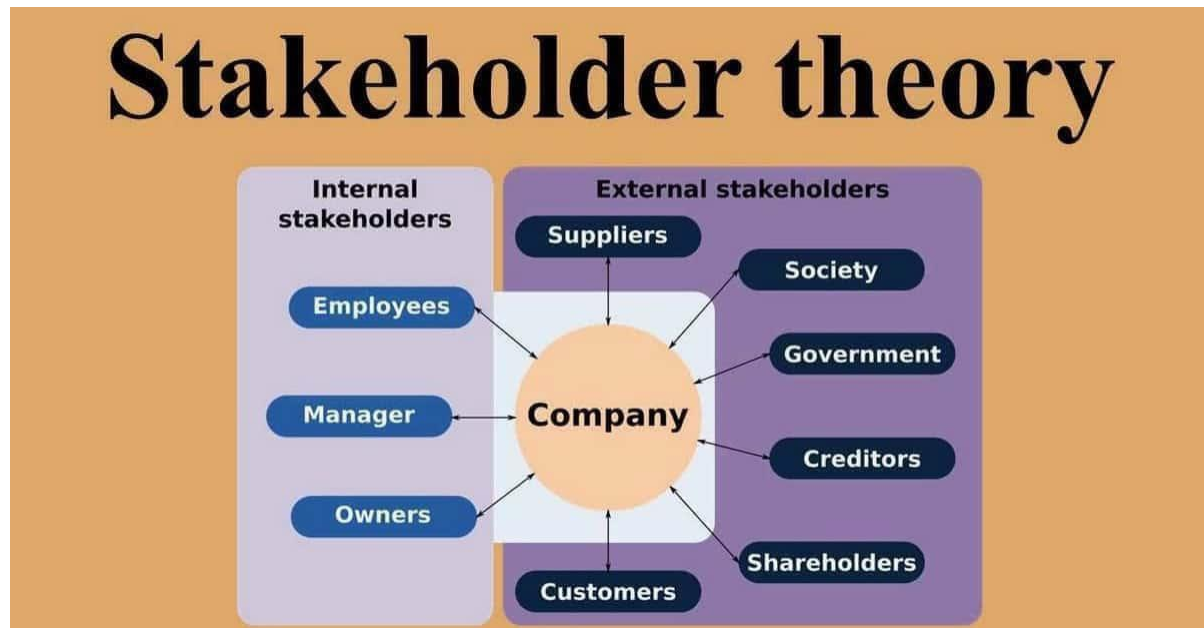


Figure 2.2: Stakeholder Theory

Source: Bhasin (2020)

According to Donaldson and Preston (1995), the stakeholder theory is framed by three aspects:

- The descriptive approach – describes and explains the structures and actions of organisations, which includes the process of management of managers' methodology of managing the nature of the organisation.
- Instrumental approach – should result in the achievement of business goals to increase profitability, growth, and sustainability. This approach also tests the connections between managing stakeholders and reaching business targets.
- Normative approach – establishes ethical guidelines for the functioning of the organisation.

The stakeholder theory became popular, but it was also challenged and criticised by some. Scholars, such as Key, (1999); Bhasin, (2020); Antonacopoulon and Meric, (2005) have challenged and criticised it. Key (1999) argues that the stakeholder theory lacks distinction and cannot be efficient in a way that allows logical examination. Bhasin (2020) concurs with Key (1999) that the stakeholder theory cannot stay in the theoretical realm. Key (1999) argues that the stakeholder theory offers no decision-making principles that would effectively guide corporate governance. Bhasin (2020) posits that the stakeholder theory malfunctions because

gathering data on the stakeholders and presenting it are not acting with the interests of the stakeholders in mind. In their analysis of stakeholder theory, Antonacopoulon and Meric (2005) conclude that the model is an ideological product rather than a scientific concept.

Organisations that function according to the stakeholder theory, which means that they fulfil all the needs of the stakeholders, combined with the records continuum theory would strengthen their corporate governance.

The stakeholder theory addresses an organisation as a system where there are stakeholders who require corporate accountability, transparency, security, and compliance with laws. This suggests that to achieve corporate governance objectives management of organisations must be accountable and transparent by ensuring proper records management (Mensah & Adams, 2014). The stakeholder theory emphasises the safeguarding of the institution's survival through information security, proper disclosure of information, ethical management, and compliance with the laws (Appiah et al., 2017). Furthermore, Appiah et al. (2017) maintain that a well-organised and effective creation and usage of records in an institution emphasises vital elements of corporate governance, which enhances the needs of all stakeholders. It is in the interest of the institution to fulfil all the stakeholder's interests by keeping and furnishing reliable records. In addition, Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013) argue that records management is a vital institutional responsibility that enhances corporate governance if its principles are thoroughly implemented.

According to McKemmish (2001) and Kemoni (2008), the components of the records continuum theory can be achieved through the effective merging of the creation, capturing, organisation, maintenance, archiving and disposition of the records of the organisation, which arise because of its daily activities. This smooth, seamless process of records management would ensure efficient records management and, ultimately, effective corporate governance.

2.3 Linking the theoretical framework to the study

The study used the records continuum model as a theoretical frame in examining records management at WSU because the theory is based on the merging of the stages of record keeping from production through all stages to archiving. According to Kemoni (2008), the records continuum model motivates records managers and archivists to collaborate under an integrated recordkeeping framework to achieve the same goals of ensuring the dependability, authenticity, and completeness of the records.

The records continuum model reflects the technological revolution in records management, as it does not rely solely on physical recordkeeping (Bearman, 1989). In the study, the model helped with checking the processes, activities, and systems used at WSU. It also helped determine whether a regulatory structure exists in the organisation. Effective records management, according to Luyombya (2010), requires legislation, a records management system, security, preservation, and human resources.

The continuum model has been utilised in numerous studies globally. This model was applied by Giba-Fosu (2020) in the study titled *Records Management Programmes in Higher Learning Institutions: A Case Study of Nelson Mandela Drive Campus, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa*. Kulcu (2009) also used this model to frame her study titled *Records Management Practice in Universities: A Comprehensive Study of Examples in Canada and Turkey*.

In the study, the stakeholder model demonstrated how records management is a corporate function when implemented appropriately to ensure accountability, transparency, and effective governance.

2.4 University records management programmes

The University of Waterloo (2022, p. 1) records management programme provides a framework for classifying and managing records to help the University meet its statutory, regulatory, and accountability obligations, preserve its corporate memory, and maintain access to the information needed to achieve the University's strategic goals. In addition, the records management department of the University of Wisconsin-Madison consults campus-wide and provides advice and support to stakeholders on all aspects of record-keeping throughout the University in line with the University's records management prescripts (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2022).

The Princeton University (2022) records management section has the same responsibilities as the University of Wisconsin-Madison. It also provides records services to university stakeholders by assisting departments/units in all aspects of managing university records.

Thus, records management programmes help departments/units meet the administrative, financial, legal, and historical needs of a university by

- Developing, reviewing, and implementing records management strategies such as policies, procedures, filing systems, records schedules, a records management committee, and a records management marketing strategy.

- Conducting continuous awareness campaigns such as workshops, training seminars etc. to staff on records management strategies to comply with university practices and legislative framework,
- Sustaining and monitoring the relationship with stakeholders.

Records management ISO 15489 (2016) developed the core concepts and principles of records management (Mosweu & Rakemane, (2020). The standard applies to all types of businesses and technological environments, including higher education institutions. The standard includes the core concepts and principles of a records management programme.

According to Munetsi (2011), the National Archives and Records Service (NARS) promotes national standards that require higher education institutions to put in place the required strategies, such as policies, processes, and various systems that lead the records management programme.

2.5 Challenges of managing effective and efficient university records

Records management challenges are present in the higher education sector just as they are in other sectors. In higher education, records management programmes continue to face a lack of strong or continuous support (Kaczmarek, 2006). Kaczmarek (2006) asserts that the lack of support may be the result of more focus on the academic priorities of institutions of higher education and side-lining the records management programme as a supporting structure of academic excellence.

According to Mosweu and Rakemane (2020), a records management programme strategy should be based on the concepts of ISO 15489-1 (2016). This standard describes the theories and principles related to

- Policies, assigned responsibilities, oversight and training to support effective record keeping.
- Processes for creating, capturing, and managing records.
- Records, records metadata, and systems of records.
- Control of records.

Despite the acknowledgement of the importance of recordkeeping, many authors have noted that records management receives inadequate attention (Phiri, 2016; Ngoepe & Ngulube, 2013). According to Palmer (2000) records management is given little credibility, as can be

seen in the fact that the topic is not taught in public administration or business studies. Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005) note the weaknesses in South African higher education information systems including records management, which make them insufficient in supporting the efficient administration of important university functions, which may include student administration and services, financial aid, teaching, and curriculum development. Furthermore, Phiri (2016) points out that higher education institutions are also under pressure to demonstrate their accountability, transparency, and good corporate governance.

According to Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013), records management is separated from c other components of corporate governance, such as auditing and risk management, which indicates that higher education institutions do not achieve the vision and objectives of the King Report III. However, the Report on corporate governance in South Africa establishes a link between good governance, legal compliance, and information management. (Ngoepe & Ngulube 2013). Furthermore, Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013) assert that in terms of clause 5.6 of the King Report III, recorded information is the most vital asset of an organisation, as it presents evidence of business activities.

The King Report IV report also acknowledges the importance of information management (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa [IoDSA], 2016). Moreover, Principle 12 of King Report IV recommends that organisations should govern information in a way that supports the organisational setting and strives to achieve its strategic objectives. Furthermore, the King Report IV's Principle 15 recommends that an organisation should ensure that assurance services and functions enable an effective control environment and that these support the integrity of information for internal decision-making and the organisation's external report.

The literature demonstrates that records management is not regarded as a valuable resource influencing the effectiveness of corporate governance. In their study, Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013) revealed that records management is not viewed as a vital component of corporate governance. However, the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 requires higher education institutions to maintain records in a well-structured system and to introduce the necessary policies and procedures to ensure that records and record-keeping practices comply with legal requirements (South Africa, 1997). According to Phiri (2016), a records management policy provides a framework for the implementation of an organisation's records management programme to ensure that complete and accurate records of its activities are created, collected, maintained, accessed, preserved or lawfully disposed of following legal requirements. Ngoepe

(2012) points out that by not implementing records management policies, governmental bodies risk not meeting their legislated mandate.

Phiri (2016) highlights that without a records management policy, an organisation cannot protect its records. According to Makgahlela (2021), a written records management policy serves as a guide for people working with records to ensure the sound management of records according to set standards. However, as Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013) assert that records management is only considered a mere footnote and is treated as a forgotten function with no consequences in government administration in South Africa. This is a result of the absence of a legislative instrument and records management tools, such as records management policies and standards, a records/information management framework, business classification schemes, records retention schedules, the assigning of responsibilities and authority, and establishing and promulgating procedures and guidelines to regulate the management of records. An organisation needs a wide range of services for the management and use of records, the designing, implementation, and administration of specialised systems for managing records and incorporating records management into business processes.

Azameti and Adjei (2013) conducted a study on the challenges faced by tertiary institutions in Ghana and found that inadequate record-keeping equipment increased insecurity. The record keepers' morale was low due to poor remuneration, which created room for bribery and the falsification of academic records. Azameti and Adjei (2013) also found a lack of internal policies to protect the integrity of records and control irregularities. Moreover, the record keepers lacked the skills and knowledge required for the work owing to a lack of training and professional development in the field of records management, which the universities should have provided (Dikopoulou & Mihioti, 2012; Azameti & Adjei, 2013).

According to Thurston and Cain (1995), in many countries, particularly developing countries, the offices and corridors of organisations were piled high with closed files, and filing cabinets were crammed with files that had ceased to be active. According to Makhura (2005), appropriate filing systems ensure the security of documents, control them and allow easy retrieval/access. Moreover, they ensure that the organisation is organised, systematic, efficient, and transparent and facilitates accountability as well as effective governance. Abdulrahman's (2015) study recommends that an adequate filing system should be implemented to make records easily accessible when needed. According to Alegbeleye and Chilaka (2019), a lack of

security controls in an organisation's filing system expose it to the loss of private and confidential records of individuals and the organisation.

2.6 The role of records management in an organisation

2.6.1 Endorsement of good corporate governance

In a study of the interaction of records management with information governance, Saffady (2016) found that a shared mission of organisational interests is an element of governance activities. It encourages interaction, cooperation, and consultation amongst stakeholders. Moreover, good corporate governance serves as a framework for an organisation to manage information and ensure compliance with industry regulations. It includes the processes, roles, and standards that a company must adhere to when creating, storing, and organising documents, records, and other company information. Sound records management is essential for good governance, effective administration, and efficiency. It serves as the foundation for developing policy, managing resources, and providing services in an organisation. Records management also serves as a foundation for accountability, transparency, and the protection of individuals' rights. The (Government of South Australia, 2012) and Nyathi and Dewah, (2017) maintain that there should be a team or committee that closely examines the records management programme, co-ordinates and carries out the implementation plan, and ensures that all records management strategies and mechanisms are in place. Records management, according to Harvard's Records Management Services (2012), promotes efficiency in the workplace by providing a seamless workflow that saves time and increases employee productivity.

2.6.2 Promotion of compliance with legislation

The South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996, sections 141 and 195(1)(f), require accountability and transparency in governance through sound records management. (South Africa 1996). Good corporate governance can only occur if the public, to whom governmental bodies are accountable, has ready access to all information that underpins the decision-making processes of governmental bodies.

According to the World Bank/IRMT (the International Records Management Trust (2008) one of the principles of good governance is the rule of law (Mutula & Wamukoya 2009). According to the World Bank (2008:2), "relevant and accurate public records are critical to

maintaining the rule of law and demonstrating fair, equal, and consistent treatment of citizens.” Without records, citizens find it difficult to hold public officials accountable for their conduct.

Records management should take place within a legal framework (Okello-Obura 2011). Understanding the legislation ensures an understanding of the legal context in which records should be created and managed. Moreover, governments use legislation to ensure that their records and archives are managed and preserved appropriately over time for accountability and historical purposes.

In South Africa, access to information is regulated by the Protection of Accelerated Access to Information Act 2 of 2000 (PAIA), while the privacy law, known as the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (POPIA), regulates a number of laws for the lawful processing of data and sets the conditions for this (South Africa 2000; 2013).

2.6.3 Supporting transparency and accountability

Records that have been properly filed and stored are easily accessible, which promotes transparency and, in turn, democracy and good governance. The poor management of records could lead to the authorities being unable to account for the decisions that they have made because no records exist to trace the use of funds. Mnjama (2000) notes that when citizens are aware of their rights to access information, they demand greater accountability and transparency. According to Khoza (2015), transparency and accountability prevents maladministration and corruption and protects the interests of stakeholders, who in government bodies, are the citizens.

2.6.4 Prevention of maleficence

Good corporate governance helps organisations to prevent harmful behaviour such as fraud, which leads to corporate scandals and civil/criminal liability and damages their reputation (Lipman & Lipman, 2006). Palmer (2000) asserts that although records management is underutilised, it is a strategic barrier against maleficence in any organisation. Records management deters misconduct and exposes it when it occurs because the evidence found in records ensures the effective prosecution of wrongdoers (Lipman and Lipman 2006).

2.6.5 Provision of records management training

According to Mosweu and Rakemane (2020), inadequate staff training, which may be due to a lack of funding, hinders good records management. Ngulube (2001) argues that a sound records management programme depends heavily on competent staff who have the necessary expertise to manage records throughout the information's lifecycle. Therefore, as overall corporate productivity, workflow procedures, security, integrity, litigation, and compliance are affected by records management, personnel must have an adequate understanding of its principles and procedures.

Records management training should focus on the basics of records management, methods and techniques, procedures, best practices, standards, legal requirements, and standard operating procedures. A training programme for records management can be customised to the needs of the organisation. Moreover, amalgamating records management training with an organisation's personnel skill-development goals would promote good corporate governance (Mosweu & Rakemane 2020). A trained workforce would alleviate the risks associated with improper records management. Thus, training programmes would be an investment in the future success of an organisation.

2.7 The relationship between records management and corporate governance

Proper records management is the backbone of good corporate governance, which Barac (2001) describes as the structures, processes and procedures, cultures, and systems that motivate the successful operation of an organisation. In addition, Barac maintains that corporate governance is the process whereby the owners and creditors of an organisation control and ensure accountability for the resources entrusted to it. According to Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013), for an organisation to be accountable and transparent, several corporate-governance components, such as internal audits, an audit committee, internal controls, and a records-management system need to be put in place. Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013) regard records management as a corporate function that supports corporate governance if its principles are appropriately implemented.

Rezaee (2010) emphasised that a close working relationship between auditing and records management can improve the effectiveness of corporate governance. Willis (2005) contends that when organisations focus on corporate governance, records management usually improves. The International Records Management Trust (IRMT) (1999) maintains that corporate governance is supported by three functions: auditing, accounting, and information management. In addition, the King Report III on corporate governance in South Africa acknowledges the link between good governance, compliance with the law, and information

management (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa [IoDSA], 2016). According to the Australian National Audit Office (2003) and Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005) records management is an important component of any organisation's corporate governance and ensures accountability and transparency.

Dikopoulou and Mihioti (2012) conducted a study of the relationship between records management and accountable, efficient governance and recommended that all levels of the administrative chain should be equipped to participate in the records management processes. Dikopoulou and Mihioti (2012) found a strong connection between good governance, information security, and records management and that archives should be treated as a historical resource and not as products or assets of the organisation that can be altered. Furthermore, they found that institutional capacity, top-level support, and technology are the driving forces of change in managing records.

According to Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013), records management and corporate governance safeguard the transparency, accountability, and good governance of organisations. Furthermore, Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013) assert that records management is a business function that has the potential to support corporate governance if its principles are correctly implemented. They add that records management should no longer be just a footnote in public-sector operations and allowed to make a meaningful contribution to good corporate governance. According to De Mingo and Cerrillo-i-Martínez (2018), access to records by all stakeholders is needed to monitor business activities and hold officials accountable for their actions. However, the level of security required for a record will differ depending on its content (Aramide et al., 2020).

2.8. South African regulations for records management

Currently, in South Africa, more than 800 regulations control record-keeping in terms of, for example, what records to create, how long to keep them, and in which format they should be kept. Moreover, the basic rights of access and privacy entrenched in the Constitution reinforce the provision of these services (South Africa, 1996a). Public and private organisations are required not only by law to ensure the proper management of records but by statutory bodies, such as the National Archives and Records Services of South Africa (NARS) and the South African Human Rights Commission to ensure that records are preserved and the right to access them is ensured (Mojapelo, 2020).

2.8.1 The Higher Education Act 101 of 1997

Sections 41 and 57 of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 regulate records management in public higher education institutions, which are, therefore, legally bound to retain and preserve documents as records of their activities. According to this Act, the responsibility for records management rests with university councils, who report to the Department of Higher Education to oversee the proper management of records, which provides evidence that these institutions fulfil their mandate of teaching, learning, research, developing communities, and good corporate governance.

2.8.2 The National Archives and Records Services of South Africa Act 43 of 1996

Government departments are legally obliged to practice sound records management to ensure effective and efficient corporate governance. According to Ngoepe and Keakope (2011), the National Archives and Records Services is tasked by the National Archives and Records Services of South Africa Act 43 of 1996 (NARSSA) to oversee the management of records in governmental bodies, which includes the safeguarding, maintenance, and accessibility of the national archival system (South Africa, 1996b). In their comparison of records and archives management in South Africa and Botswana, Ngoepe and Keakope (2011) reveal that although records and archives management services are governed by statutes, they are not adhered to by the governments and parastatals. In addition, archivists and records managers in both countries are marginalised by the state. However, according to Mosweu and Simon (2018), the records and archives management is by these statutes.

Although the NARSSA has mandated heads of government departments to manage records efficiently, they do not prioritise records management because according to Mojapelo (2020), the backing is lacking from the NARS. However, Mojapelo (2020) asserts that the NARSSA mandates the NARS to make public and non-public records accessible by the public and the state and promote the preservation and use of the national archival heritage.

In terms of section 13 of the NARSSA, higher education institutions should implement policies and procedures to ensure that their records management practices comply with the requirements of the Act. Section 13(5)(a) of the Act orders all heads of governmental bodies to designate a records manager to ensure compliance with the Act (South Africa, 1996b).

2.8.3 The Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000

The Constitution made provision for the passing of the Promotion of Access to Information Act No. 2 of 2000 (PAIA) the implementation of which is dependent on proper records management in the public sector (Mojapelo, 2020; South Africa, 2000). Thus, the PAIA gives effect to section 32 of the Constitution, which legislates the right of access to information (South Africa, 2000). Moreover, the Information Regulator in South Africa is responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the PAIA. Mojapelo's (2020) study titled *Strengthening public sector records management through the Information Regulator in South Africa*, revealed that the Information Regulator is making great strides in improving the records management space.

2.8.4 The Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013

The Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (POPIA) was promulgated on 26 November 2013 to protect the personal information of natural and juristic persons from malicious intent following the privacy rights determined by section 14 of the Constitution (South Africa, 1996a, 2013). According to Buys (2017), the main intent of the POPIA is to protect the processing of personal information by public and private bodies. The act protects the distribution of personal information and prevents the abuse of personal information by individuals and organisations, nationally and internationally. The protection of personal information is vital in today's electronic world where information can be easily created, captured, stored, and shared (Pelteret & Ophoff, 2016). In recent years, the protection of personal information has regularly been featured as a topic in news media and has become the law that has been cited in legal cases in South Africa. According to Pelteret and Ophoff (2016), multidisciplinary privacy studies have been conducted around the world for decades; however, privacy remains a subject for future research.

The POPIA regulates the lawful collection, handling, and utilisation of data. Moreover, it limits the unlawful transferring of personal information across national boundaries through its codes of conduct. Non-compliance with the directives of the POPIA may result in the Information Regulator imposing fines of up to R10 million, depending on the circumstances (South Africa, 2013).

2.9 Summary

The literature presented in this chapter reveals that records management plays a pivotal role in good corporate governance, especially in higher educational institutions by promoting

accountability, transparency, and the rule of law. In addition, this chapter has explained two theoretical models of records management: the records continuum model and the stakeholder theory, which framed the study. Furthermore, the chapter has explained the legislation affecting records management in South Africa. Although the few South African studies on records management were emphasised in this chapter, the literature from other countries was also considered.

The following chapter explains the research design and methodology, thereby providing insight into the data collection, sampling and data analysis methods used.



CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research design and methodology and the reasons for choosing them are explained. The chapter presents the following sections: the research design; the quantitative research design; the research methodology; sampling and the sample; the data collection method; the data collection instrument; data analysis: and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research design

A research design is a framework for determining the methodology used for collecting and analysing, interpreting, and reporting the data in a study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 8; Ngulube, 2005, p. 128). According to Kothari (2004:31), a research design is a theoretical configuration of the study and a master plan guiding the investigator in the various stages of the research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, pp. 58; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996, pp. 99; Kothari, 2004, pp. 31). Selltiz et al. (1965, pp. 50) stress that “a research design is an arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose.”

A research design involves strategies about the way, in which the data will be collected and analysed to ensure that the final report answers the research questions (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006:35; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996:99; Polit & Beck, 2004:49). According to Kumar (2005, p. 84), a research design serves to identify procedures and logistical arrangements required to undertake a study and highlights the importance of quality in these procedures to ensure their validity, objectivity, and accuracy. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001, pp. 75), “different types of research studies attempt to answer different types of research problems or questions and they end up employing different combinations of methods and procedures”. The study chose a quantitative research design whereby a research methodology using data in the form of numbers and statistics would be followed to answer the research questions.

3.2.1 *Quantitative research design*

According to Burns (2000:43), “quantitative research uses descriptive statistics that enable the researcher to summarise quantities of data by using graphs and numbers such as values and percentages”. A quantitative research design indicates experiments, surveys, and the analysis of existing statistics as part of the research methodology (Neuman, 2000, pp.56). “A quantitative study measures a phenomenon using numbers in conjunction with statistical procedures to process data and summarise results” (Creswell, 1994, p. 2; Locke et al., 1998, p. 23). The choice of a quantitative research design was based on the following:

- Collection of reliable and accurate data
- Using quick data collection methods
- Provision of a wider scope of data analysis
- Offering no scope for opinion or bias in the results
- Results can be generalised to the population

The research objectives and questions aimed to find information about the phenomenon under study, which was records management at WSU. Quantitative research designs seek answers to questions that start with the word “what” (as opposed to why and how in qualitative research) and objectives that seek to discover what the phenomenon comprises. The following were the research questions that the study sort to answer using a quantitative research design:

- What strategies and mechanisms are in place at WSU to manage records?
- What records management policies and standard operating procedures support the effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of corporate governance at WSU?
- What is the relationship between records management and corporate governance at WSU?

In addition, the quantitative research design was followed to achieve the following research objectives:

- Determine the strategies and mechanisms in place at WSU to manage records.
- Determine the records management policies and standard operating procedures that support the effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of corporate governance at WSU.
- Determine the relationship between records management and corporate governance at WSU.

3.3 Research methodology

Different scholars have provided detailed definitions of research methodology. Lewins (1992) views research methodology as the systematic scrutiny of what researchers do and why they do it. This involves considering areas such as the concept of a theory, the relationship between theory and evidence, the strengths, and weaknesses of methods, and understanding the nature of the analysis. In addition to the research design, the research methodology directs the study in the collection of data to address the research questions and objectives, arranging and combining the information to enable analysis, conclusions and recommendations that contribute to the expansion of knowledge (Leedy, 1997:9; Leedy & Omrod, 2005:6; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009:21). According to Perry (1998), the research methodology comprises the strategy for the study and the research methods used in the empirical study.

3.3.1 Sampling and the sample

The empirical study utilised purposive sampling in choosing subjects (the sample) because, according to Battaglia (2008), this method ensures that the same can be reasonably assumed to be representative of the population, which is a clearly defined group of people or objects with the same attributes. In quantitative research, a sample is a portion of the population that represents the whole population group to ensure that results can be generalised to the population (Abrahamson, 1983).

The population from which the sample was selected was limited to the Nelson Mandela Drive Campus in Mthatha and Buffalo City Campus in East London, both campuses are administrative hubs of WSU. However, the University has four campuses spread throughout the eastern part of the Eastern Cape: Buffalo City Campus in East London, Ibika Campus in Butterworth, Queenstown Campus in Queenstown, and Nelson Mandela Drive Campus in Mthatha.

The purposive sampling method is a judgemental form of sampling (Aina, 2002) because the researcher uses his/her judgement in selecting the participants who, in the study, had to be knowledgeable about records management and corporate governance at WSU for the researcher to gather accurate data (Aina, 2002). However, purposive sampling can be a challenge in the determination of who should be selected from the categories.

In the study, the researcher had to select a sample from a list of academic support staff, which included examination sand and admissions officers, and another list of governance and

administrative support staff, which included the registrar, legal advisors, the secretariat, records management staff, human resources personnel and finance department officials. Nevertheless, using his judgement, the researcher purposively selected 26 participants from the lists comprising 89 staff members. In other words, the researcher focused on people who dealt with the creating of and caring for records at WSU. Table 1 below provides a summary of the selected population:

Table 3.1: Sample selected through purposive sampling

Job title	Total selected
Registrar	1
Examinations officer	8
Admissions officer	8
Legal officer	1
Secretariat	1
Records management officer	1
Human resources department staff member	3
Finance department staff member	3
Total	26

3.3.2 *Data collection*

The study used the survey data collection method. A survey is a quantitative research method that consists of a questionnaire, which efficiently collects data from a set of selected respondents. A survey usually consists of closed-ended questions with very few open-ended questions. Surveys are described by Tanny (2021) as procedures followed in quantitative research whereby investigators administer questionnaires, interviews, or polls to a sample or to the entire population to gather information which is statistically analysed to describe trends in the responses to answer the research questions and achieve the research objections.

Access to the study area was part of the initial phase of the survey, which was negotiated at the start of the research project (Blaxter et al., 2006, p. 155; Neuman, 2007, p. 282) and involved writing a letter to inform the institution and participants about the objectives of the study, the timespan, the potential impact, and the outcome of the research (Creswell, 2003, p. 65).

Institutional permission (sometimes referred to as gatekeeper permission) ensured that the researcher, complied with South African privacy legislation. The ethical norms and standards followed at WSU dictate that, when considering conducting research with or on the institution's people or data, the researcher must first obtain institutional permission. Therefore, the

researcher followed the processes e by requesting gatekeeper permission to conduct at the WSU through the Division of Academic Affairs and the Research Directorate of Research and Innovation and the permission was granted (see Appendix C).

3.3.2.1 Data collection/measuring instrument

The questionnaire (see Appendix B) was designed in line with the research objectives and questions. It was sent as a web-based, self-administered questionnaire to the 26 selected respondents. The first part of the questionnaire elicited the background information of the respondents and the second and third parts were guided by the questions. In other words, Section A elicited personal biographical information; Section B elicited participants' perceptions of records management in their organisation; and Section C focused on the relationship between records management and corporate governance.

A questionnaire was chosen as the data collection instrument because it could collect a lot of data quickly, efficiently, anonymously, and economically (Rao, 2008; Dessler 2000, p. 91). However, response rates can be low, and questionnaires might not be correctly or properly completed (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:112).

As the data collection was during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, which forced the country into several lockdowns, most businesses including higher institutions were closed. Therefore, respondents were unable to access their work emails and were unable to work remotely from home or were unwilling to participate. Therefore, collecting data was delayed and the response rate was inadequate.

In 2022, the researcher tried again by asking a personal contact to administer the questionnaires using a drop-and-pick-up method whereby the completed questionnaires were collected. In addition, the researcher sent the questionnaires via email again. This second attempt yielded an acceptable response rate, although it was not high. Of the 26 questionnaires that were distributed 53,84% (14) were returned, and 46,15% (12) were not returned. Figure 3.1 below indicates the response rate.

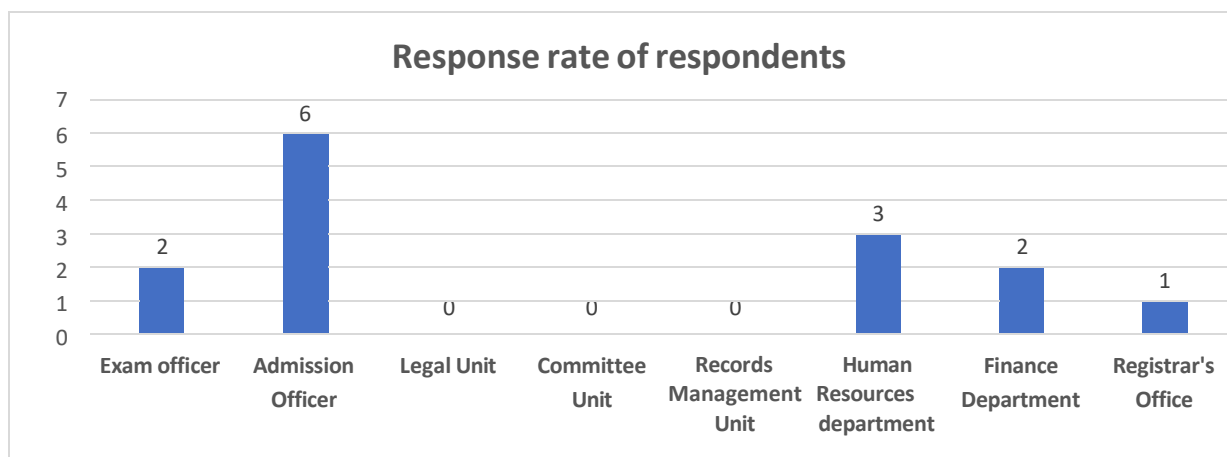


Figure 3.1: Response rate

Out of the 26 questionnaires administered, the study achieved an overall response rate of 53,84% (14) with the highest response rate being that of the admissions officers at 23,07% (6), No responses were received from the legal, secretariat, and records management units. After several follow-ups, the researcher perceived the reason for the non-response rate to be the respondents' busy schedules and the COVID-19 pandemic, which made it difficult to achieve a higher response rate. Babbie and Mouton (2001) maintain that a response rate of over 50% is satisfactory for data analysis, a response rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% or more is excellent. The satisfactory response rate achieved in the study was because of the persistent follow-ups and the researcher's contact who had helped him.

3.3.3 Data analysis

According to Kothari (1990, p. 151), data analysis summarises the collected data and organises it to answer the research questions and achieve the research objectives. In the study, the quantitative data gathered from the completed questionnaires were summarised and analysed using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The data analysed from the responses to the closed-ended questions were presented using tables indicating frequencies, and percentages. The responses to open-ended questions were transcribed and analysed by topic, using the qualitative data analysis technique of formulating themes.

3.4. Ethical consideration

According to Creswell (2009), every researcher is obliged to respect research ethics, which includes considering the participants' rights. Before the fieldwork, ethical approval was given by the Department of Arts Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape (UWC) (see Appendix D). In addition, permission to conduct research was granted by WSU (see

Appendix C). The participants were informed about the procedures of the research and their consent was requested before participating in the study (see Appendix A). The privacy and confidentiality of the participants were respected and guaranteed.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed, explained, and justified the research design and methodology chosen for the study. In addition, the chapter explained in detail the research design; the quantitative research design; the research methodology; sampling and the sample; the data collection method; the data collection instrument; data analysis and ethical considerations.

The results of the data analysis will be presented in the next chapter.



CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and interprets the results of the analysis of the quantitative data gathered through a questionnaire survey conducted with 26 members of WSU staff who were familiar with records management and corporate governance. The results are presented and interpreted according to the three sections of the questionnaire.

4.2 Results of analysis of questionnaire responses

4.2.1 Respondents' background

Section A of the questionnaire collected data on the background of the respondents: their gender, respective units, job titles, work experience and roles and responsibilities in records management.

4.2.1.1 Gender

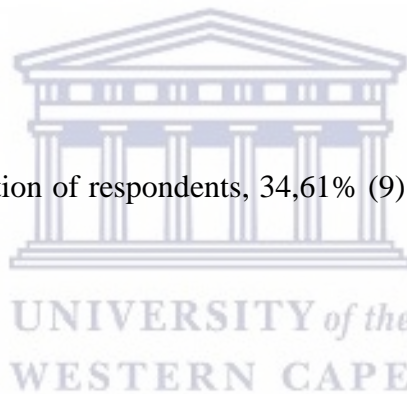
In terms of the gender distribution of respondents, 34,61% (9) were females and 19,23% (5) were males.

4.2.1.2 Areas of responsibility

The areas of responsibility of the 26 respondents were as follows: 8 examination officers; 8 admissions officers; 1 legal advisor, 1 secretariat; 1 records management official; 3 human resources department staff members; 3 finance department personnel; and 1 registrar's office representative.

4.2.1.3 Education

The respondents were asked to indicate their highest qualification and 30,76% (8) were degree holders, 15,38% (4) had diplomas, whereas 7,69% (2) had obtained a master's. None of the respondents had a doctorate.



4.2.2 Records management at WSU

The first research objective was to determine the strategies and mechanisms in place at WSU to manage records and the second was to determine the records management policies and standard operating procedures that support the effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of corporate governance at WSU. Therefore, Section B of the questionnaire asked questions to achieve these objectives.

4.2.2.1 Records management strategies and mechanisms

The respondents were asked to indicate their knowledge on records management strategies and mechanisms that are in place at WSU, 50% (7) of the respondents said that they had strategies and mechanisms in place and the other 50% (7) said they were not aware of their existence. The overall impression of these variations in responses might be related to a lack of communication about the activities that take place within the institution, as well as the records management unit's inability to reach out to all respondents who deal with institutional records.

Organisations must develop records management strategies to enhance the quality, availability, and effective use of their records. It also serves as a framework to guide all records management activities in the organisation for consistency, transparency, accountability, and sound governance practices.

As part of the study's attempt to determine whether strategies and mechanisms were in place (Research Objective 1), the respondents were asked if the University had an accessible filing system in place. All the respondents indicated that the WSU had a functioning general filing system but not necessarily sound records management, many were unaware of any other records management strategies and mechanisms, as indicated above. Nevertheless, at least 100% of the participants revealed that there was a filing system if nothing else in place. According to Coetzer (2012), records should be kept in an organised filing system for convenience. Filing systems, according to Makhura (2005), are critical in controlling and ensuring the security of documents and ease of retrieval. It assists the organisation in being organised, systematic, efficient, and transparent, with easy access to records.

4.2.2.2 Records management policies and standard operating procedures

This question sought to determine whether respondents were aware of records management related policies and operating procedures used at WSU, 50% (7) indicated that the WSU had a records management policy and standard operating procedures and the other 50% (7) did not agree. Only half of the departments dealing with records management are aware of policies and processes is unjustifiable.

Figure 4.1 below summarises the responses to the questions on records management at WSU.

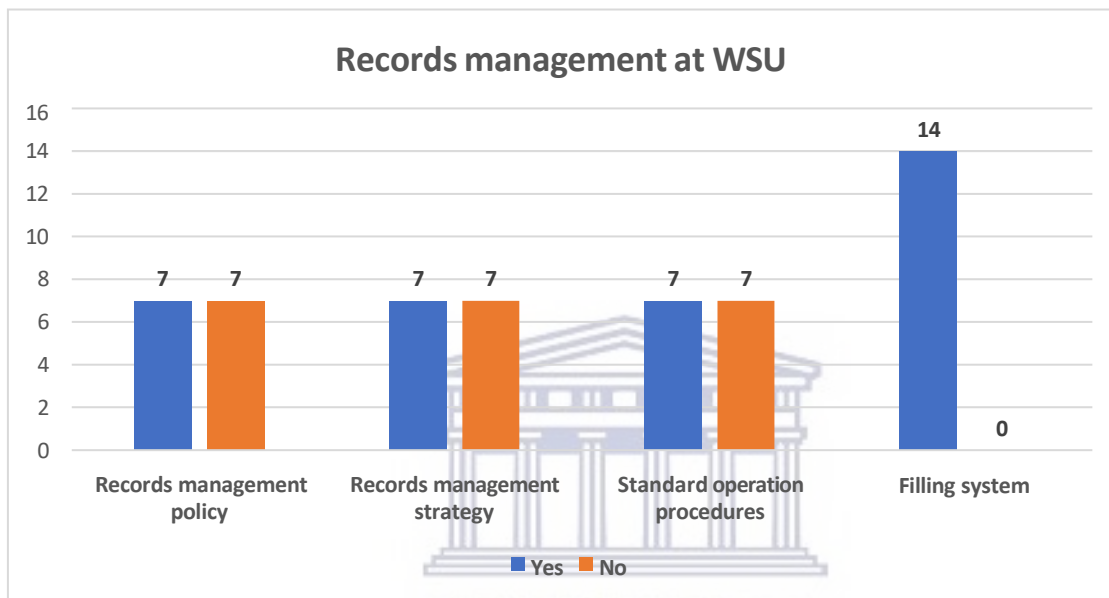


Figure 4.1: Records management at WSU

4.2.2.3 Records management committee

When respondents were asked if WSU has a records management committee, 57,14% (8) said yes, and 42,85% (6) said no, which indicates that most of the respondents were aware of any specific records management committee. A records management committee is responsible for guiding a university's records management and policies, thereby developing, and maintaining the records retention and disposition schedule and developing practices and standards to support best practices and adhere to regulatory requirements. It also requires an adequate records management programme and a plan for implementing it. According to Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013), for an organisation to be accountable and transparent, corporate-governance components, such as records management and the records management committee, which oversees the implementation of records management, must be included in the institution.

4.2.2.4 Guidance from the records management unit

The respondents were asked to confirm the role played by the records management unit in guiding the management of institutional records. The question was meant for respondents to provide an opinion (open ended response) instead, they provided yes or no as an answer. The majority of respondents 85.71%; (12) indicated yes, 7% (1) respondent said no and only 7% (1) gave open ended answer in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Guidance from the records management unit

Question	Quotation
In your opinion, is the records management unit effective in providing guidance in the management of institutional records?	“There are no proper guidelines to provide guidance”

4.2.2.5 Records management in-house training

The respondents were asked if they had attended any in-house records management training, which would have ensured efficiency and, ultimately good corporate governance. The result was positive since 71,42% (10) of respondents had received in-house training compared with 21.42% (3) who did not. However, this result contradicts that of Giba-Fosu’s (2020) study of WSU records management, which revealed that all the respondents in that study had not received training in records management. It may be possible that the respondents in the current study did not distinguish records management training from other in-house administration training offered by the institution. Nevertheless, sound records management relies heavily on training.

4.2.2.6 Records storage

Respondents were asked if the institution had a secured storage area for its records, which would indicate accountability for information, which might need to be accessed as evidence of the institution's activities or need to be kept safe from unauthorised use – all in the interests of good corporate governance. All (100%)14 of the respondents indicated that the WSU records are stored in a secured storage facility, which indicates that records are properly managed as tangible evidence of an organisation's activities and secured from maleficence.

Regardless of the format, storage and handling processes are required to keep valuable records safe for as long as possible. The records must be stored in a secure location under favourable preservation conditions, such as appropriate temperature and humidity. To preserve records effectively, everyone involved in their management or preservation must share responsibility for their physical security and protection to prevent unauthorised access. Ngoepe and Van der Walt (2009) define security in the context of records management as “the policies, procedures, and operational measures used to prevent unapproved access, tampering, theft, or physical damage to information”.

4.2.2.7 Records retrieval and accessibility

The survey further investigated the records retrieval and accessibility of records at WSU. This indicates that of the total respondents, 93% (13) of the respondents maintained that they were pleased with the records retrieval and access system offered to stakeholders when records are needed. However, 1 respondent (7%) said that he/she was not pleased. A records management system is required to reduce retrieval time and allow easy access for authorised users. Records management, according to Harvard's Records Management Services (2012), should promote efficiency in the workplace by providing a seamless process of retrieval and access that saves time and increases employee productivity.

4.2.3 Relationship between records management and corporate governance

The third research objective was to determine the relationship between records management and corporate governance at WSU. Therefore, Section C of the questionnaire asked questions to achieve these objectives.

4.2.3.1 Records management promotes transparency and accountability

The participants were asked whether records management at WSU enabled transparency and accountability, which would underpin effective corporate governance. Twelve of the respondents (46,15%) agreed that records management promotes transparency and accountability at WSU as compared with 14% (2) who did not agree. According to Chinyemba (2011), when records are properly managed, transparent, and accountable governance is possible, which would promote the rule of law. According to the Australian National Audit Office (2003) and Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005), records management is fundamental to accountability and transparency in an organisation and thus must be prioritised. Figure 4.2

below presents the respondents' views on records management as an enabler of transparency and accountability.



Figure 4.2: Records management as an enabler of transparency and accountability

4.2.3.2 Compliance with records management legislation

The respondents were asked if records management at WSU complied with relevant legislation, such as the PAIA and the POPIA, which government-funded public institutions should do. The result was positive, as the majority, (93%;13) of the respondents indicated that WSU was complying with government regulations in managing its records. Only 7% of the participants (1) stated that the university was non-compliant, which shows that WSU is taking compliance with government legislation seriously. Records management principles and best practices for government institutions in South Africa are determined by the National Archives and Records Services of South Africa Act 43 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996b). According to Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005), accurate records underpin accountability, transparency, and good governance. Figure 4.3 below graphically illustrates WSU's compliance with government legislation on records management

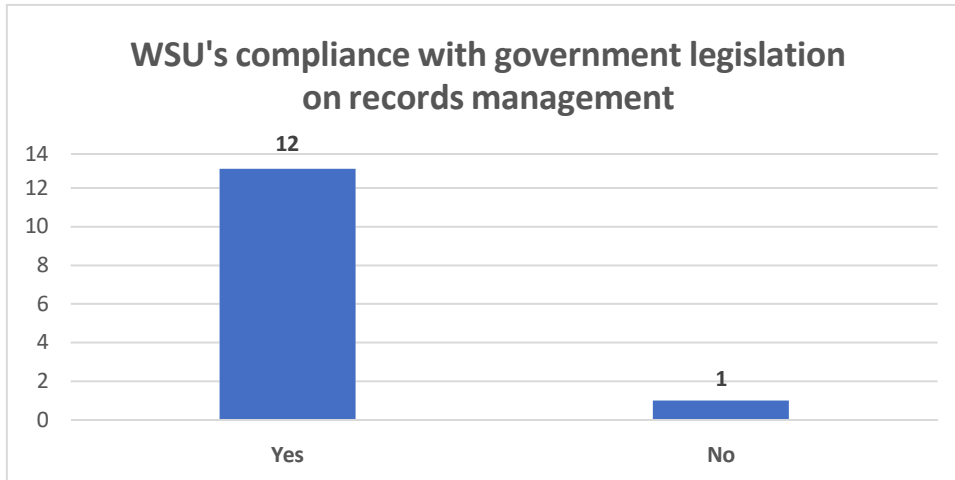


Figure 4.3: WSU's compliance with government legislation on records management

4.2.3.3 Records access control

The respondents were asked to give their own opinion on whether access to WSU's records was controlled. Table 4.2 below presents the respondents' words expressing their perceptions on records access control.

Table 4.2: Participants' perceptions on record access control

Question	Quotations
Does your records management programme ensure the security of information in its records? If yes, how is the access controlled?	<p>"Yes, it does, all relevant stakeholders use their credentials to access records for security purposes."</p> <p>"No."</p> <p>"Records are stored in a secured storage."</p> <p>"Through a firewall."</p> <p>"Not sure, since some of the things are done at an institutional level."</p> <p>"Request via email for access."</p> <p>"Yes, it's controlled by our network specialists and system analysts."</p>

Access to records needs to be controlled to prevent unauthorised access and theft. The level of sensitivity of the content of a record should determine its accessibility and level of security (Aramide et al., 2020). According to Buys (2017), the main intent of the POPIA is to protect the processing of personal information by public and private bodies. The Act prevents the unlawful distribution and abuse of personal information by individuals and organisations, nationally and internationally.

4.2.3.4 Stakeholders' participation in records management

Respondents were asked if WSU promotes stakeholders' participation in records management. The responses are presented through direct quotations in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Stakeholders' participation in records management

Question	Quotations
Does your records management team promote stakeholder participation in records management programmes? If yes, please explain how?	"No". "Not applicable". "I'm not sure". "All the University records are in the intranet system of the university".

According to De Mingo and Cerrillo-i-Martínez (2018), access to records by all stakeholders is needed to monitor business activities, guarantee transparency, and hold officials accountable for their actions. Moreover, the PAIA legislates access to information by both public and private bodies. These comments show lack of stakeholders' involvement in records management.

4.2.3.5 Records management as an essential part of institutional governance

The participants were asked whether records management is considered an essential part of institutional governance. This question was asked because the nexus between records management and effective corporate governance has been questioned. The majority, (93%, 13), indicated that records management is considered an essential part of institutional governance at WSU. Only 1 respondent (7%) did not agree that records management is considered an essential part of institutional governance at the University.

All universities' activities, especially business transactions, should be documented in records the efficient management of which would indicate the extent of the institutions' transparency, accountability, and effective governance. In addition, records provide evidence if a university faces litigation, for example.

4.3 Summary

The quantitative data, which were collected using a structured questionnaire to answer the research questions and achieve the research objectives, were analysed, and the results were presented in this chapter. The analysis involved the use of Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to generate statistics of the answers to the closed-ended questionnaire questions. These statistics were

explained and presented in tables and figures in this chapter.

The next chapter presents a discussion of the results, which were presented and interpreted in this one.



CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented and interpreted the results of the quantitative data analysis, whereas this chapter discusses and compares them with the results of studies reviewed in Chapter 2. This chapter explains the results according to the following themes:

1. The role of records management in corporate governance at WSU
2. The relationship between records management and corporate governance

The records continuum model and stakeholder theory guided the researcher in identifying areas to investigate in the study. In addition, these theories guided the researcher in filtering data relevant to the study.

5.2 The role of records management in corporate governance

This theme is based on the results of the analysis of the data gathered to achieve the first two research objectives. The first research objective was to determine the strategies and mechanisms in place at WSU to manage records. The second research objective was to determine the records management policies and standard operating procedures that support the effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of corporate governance at WSU.

5.2.1 *Records management policy awareness*

The results revealed that the records management policy at WSU was not fully known by all respondents, which means that it would not have been fully implemented, thereby impacting the efficiency of the process. Well-formulated policies that state standards of conduct, if implemented, ensure good corporate governance in an organisation. Without adequate knowledge and implementation of policies that set out clear requirements and processes, chaos and mismanagement can spread across an organisation. Moreover, the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (South Africa, 1997) requires higher education institutions to maintain records in well-structured systems and to have the necessary policies and procedures to ensure that records and record-keeping practices comply with legal requirements.

According to Phiri (2016), a records management policy provides a framework for the implementation of an organisation's records management system to ensure that complete and accurate records of its activities are created, collected, maintained, accessed, preserved, and lawfully disposed of following legal requirements. Ngoepe (2012) points out that by not

implementing records management policies, government bodies risk not adhering to legislation. Phiri (2016) highlighted that without a records management policy, an organisation cannot protect its records. According to Makgahlela (2021), a records management policy should serve as a guide for people who work with records to ensure sound records management and compliance with the set standards.

5.2.2 Standard operating procedures

The results showed that standard operating procedures for records management at WSU were not fully known to all the respondents, which meant that the system would not have been as efficient as it should have been. Standard operating procedures for records creation through to disposal, if followed, create a culture of efficient records management in compliance with legislation, thereby ensuring transparency, accountability, and effective corporate governance.

According to Mosweu and Rakemane (2020), records management should be based on the ISO 15489-1 standard (2016), which provides guidance in the following areas:

- Policies, assigned responsibilities, oversight and training to support effective record keeping
- Processes for creating, capturing, and managing records
- Records, records metadata, and systems of recording
- Control of records

Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013) asserted that records management in most organisations only reflects as a footnote and is treated as a forgotten function with no consequences in government administration in South Africa. Furthermore, Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013) view the smooth operation of records management as defeated without the application of sound records management strategies according to a regulated policy framework, classification schemes, schedules, procedures and assigned responsibilities.

5.2.3 Records filing, access, and security

The findings of the study revealed that all the respondents felt that the filing system place at WSU is functional compared with other universities in developing countries where offices and corridors are piled high with closed files and filing cabinets crammed with files that had ceased to be active (Thurston & Cain, 1995). Furthermore, as Makhura (2005) claims, well-organised filing systems and easy access to records are fundamental to controlling and ensuring the

security of documents and handy retrieval, thereby helping institutions to be organised, systematic, efficient, transparent and examples of good corporate governance due. A sound records management practice ensures that records are correctly filed, stored, and protected from loss, damage and unlawful removal.

Although all respondents in the study claimed the filing system was adequate at WSU, half indicated that records can be easily accessed, whilst the other half did not agree. Not only does this result contradict that concerning filing but also goes against the Promotion of Access to Information Act (No. 2 of 2000), which is supposed to foster a culture of transparency and accountability in South Africa. If WSU does not provide access to information, it runs the risk of not being able to provide evidence when required, for example, in a legal case.

The research results revealed that the security of records at WSU is a concern for some respondents. The anticipated administrative efficiency by records continuum model through regulatory recordkeeping to the safe keeping were found to be poor at WSU. According to Alegbeleye and Chilaka (2019), a lack of security exposes an organisation to the loss of or damage to records due to unauthorised access. Unegbu and Adenike (2013) maintain although records should be accessible, they should also be secured against unauthorised access and protected from damage due to exposure to the elements or fire, for example.

5.2.4 *Records management committee*

The results study revealed that not all respondents are aware of the existence in its guidelines the (Government of South Australia, 2012) specifies that there should be a team or committee to monitor, evaluate and coordinate the creation and implementation of records management policies, guidelines, and strategies.

5.2.5 *Records management training*

The results revealed that almost all of the respondents indicated that they had undergone in-house training in records management, although some were not sure what the training had been about. Dikopoulou and Mihiotis (2010) recommend that records personnel at all levels have appropriate training to learn new skills and knowledge. However, WSU records management

unit needs to promote and facilitate ongoing training and continuous professional development for staff involved in records management.

5.3 Relationship between records management and corporate governance

This theme is based on the results of the analysis of the data gathered to achieve the third research objective, which was to determine the relationship between records management and corporate governance at WSU.

5.3.1 Transparency and accountability

According to Momoti and King (2020), A trusted government institution can demonstrate accountability and transparency and is constantly striving to service delivery and cost-effectiveness.

Most respondents in this study revealed that records management had ensured transparency and accountability towards stakeholders and the public at WSU, which is a government entity. This suggests that transparency and accountability had been ensured through sound records management owing to the lessons learnt from the institution having been placed under administration because of poor corporate governance. This shows that WSU is adequate in following the principles of the stakeholder theory where transparency and accountability are prioritised. According to Chinyemba (2011), Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005) and Appiah et al. (2017, pp. 42) when records are properly managed, they become a powerful tool for accelerating transparency and accountability, which results in good governance. In both the public and private sectors, good records management systems ensure corporate transparency, accountability, information security and effective governance.

5.3.2 Legislation compliance

The results revealed that WSU is compliant with legislation on records management, which might also be owing to lessons learnt in the past. The legislative frameworks mentioned in Chapter 2 require higher education institutions to transparent and accountable through efficient records management, which would ensure that all actions and decisions are recorded and can be readily viewed through the records. Therefore, higher education institutions are expected to adhere to the directives of the records management-related legislation to ensure effective corporate governance (Mutula & Wamukoya, 2009). Without transparency ensured by access records, stakeholders would find it difficult to hold higher education officials accountable for their actions, which would have an impact on the delivery of higher education programmes.

5.3.3 Stakeholder participation

The results revealed that stakeholders are not involved in records management at WSU. Stakeholders in records management would be those who are in any way affected by it. Apart from the public and government officials, stakeholders would include those who are part of the institutions, such as senior managers and staff of core business units, such as compliance, legal, Finance, information technology, risk management and human resources, for example.

These units should be represented on a records management committee, which the respondents indicated did not exist at WSU. According to Saffady (2016), a siloed approach whereby stakeholders operate independently and, in some cases, competitively, is incompatible with effective governance. Saffady (2016) adds that a shared pursuit of institutional interests is a feature of effective corporate governance. Therefore, records management should involve stakeholders through interaction and cooperative consultation. Nevertheless, the respondents' perception was that stakeholders were not involved in records management, which suggests non-adherence to the Promotion of Access to Information Act. 2 of 2000 (South Africa, 2000), which promotes the right to access to information and a culture of transparency and accountability amongst all stakeholders.

5.4 Summary

This chapter discussed the results of the empirical study in terms of the role of records management in corporate governance and the relationship between records management and corporate governance at WSU. However, the results revealed that apart from an effective filing system and some training in records management, other aspects of records management, such as access, security, policy, standard operating procedures, and a records management committee were either completely lacking, inadequate or simply unknown by those directly involved in records management. Even if a lack of knowledge was the only problem, it would mean that records management was not as efficient as it should have been, which would have had an adverse effect on corporate governance. Moreover, although respondents indicated that transparency, accountability, and compliance with legislation were evidenced in WSU's records management, stakeholders were not involved, which suggests that records management needs to include them to become more efficient and, ultimately, improve corporate governance at WSU.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study by providing a summary of the results in light of the literature findings and research questions, recommendations, the study's contributions, and limitations and indicating the possibilities for further research.

6.2 Summary of results

- This section will provide a summary of the results of the empirical research to find answers to the following research questions: What strategies and mechanisms are in place at WSU to manage records?
- What records management policies and standard operating procedures support the effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of corporate governance at WSU?
- What is the relationship between records management and corporate governance at WSU?

In addition, in this section, the answers to these questions indicated in the research results are linked to relevant findings of the literature review.

6.2.1 *Strategies and mechanisms for records management*

6.2.1.1 *Filing system*

The results revealed that the only mechanism that all respondents were aware of at WSU was a filing system. Nevertheless, Makhura (2005) maintains that a filing system is of fundamental importance in controlling and ensuring the security of documents and its handy of retrieval. It helps the institution to be organised, systematic, efficient, and transparent and enables ease of access to records. Abdulrahman's (2015) study recommended that an adequate filing system should be implemented in records management to allow easy access to records when needed.

In their study, Gesmundo et al. (2020) revealed that records management strategies have a positive significant relationship with professional performance. The International Standard Organization (ISO) 15489-1 (2016) standard describes the theories and principles relating to records management policy, records management strategy, procedures, filing systems,

assigning responsibilities, and training to support effective records management (Mosweu & Rakemane 2020). Moreover, Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013), the purpose of the smooth operation of a sound records management process is defeated if strategic records management tools and procedures, the establishment of records management frameworks, a filing system, effective assignment of responsibilities and authorities, procedures and policies for regulating records are not in place. However, WSU appeared to only have a filing system in place.

6.2.1.2 Records management committee

The results revealed that most of the respondents were not aware of any records management committee. However, Nyathi and Dewah (2017) recommend the formation of a university records management committee to accelerate and present records management strategies and financial plans to staff and university management. Furthermore, Nyathi and Dewah (2017) maintain that the participation in records management of all stakeholders at all levels of the organisation would be ensured if they were represented on a records management committee.

A records management committee would provide leadership in records management and ensure its prioritisation amongst organisational objectives, its successful execution and maintenance. According to the guidelines of the (Government of South Australia, 2012), records management should have a solid supporting structure, such as a records management committee to track the progress of the implementation and to ensure that all records management strategies and mechanisms are in place. The guidelines also state that the records management committee should not be disbanded after the implementation of a records management programme because it is required to maintain, oversee, keep abreast of changes in the regulatory framework and proactively address the programme's needs.

6.2.1.3 Security and access

The results revealed that the security of records at WSU was a concern. According to Alegbeleye and Chilaka (2019), a lack of security in the management of an organisation's records exposes it to the loss or damage of confidential and essential records. Unegbu and Adenike (2013) maintain that for security and durability reasons, records should be kept protected from unauthorized access or damage.

6.2.1.4 Records management training

The study revealed that respondents had attended training, although some said they were unaware of the type of training they received. Records management training provided to employees is a precursor to sound records management. Phiri (2016) concurs with Dikopoulou and Mihiotis (2020) that it is vital for recordkeeping staff to undergo training to remain relevant in the rapidly changing world, more so, in records management and other areas where digital records are increasingly becoming the predominant medium of information. Therefore, in records management, the staff need to be trained to have adequate skills and knowledge to manage records effectively.

6.2.1.5 Records management policies and standard operating procedures

According to the findings of the study, not all the WSU employees are aware of their university's records management policy or standard operating procedures, which suggests that if they did exist, they would not have been implemented by many of the staff, thereby making the ineffective. This result is the same as that of Makgahlela's (2021) study, which investigated the records management practices of selected municipalities in Limpopo and found that although the municipalities had records management policies and standard operating procedures, most of staff were unaware of them. In addition, in their study of the implementation of a records management policy at the National University of Science and Technology in Zimbabwe, Nyathi and Dewah (2017) revealed that policy implementation is dependent on the initiation of the policy by the University Registrar and spearheading by the manager of the records management department. Nyathi and Dewah (2017) recommended that the records management policy be made public on their university's website and that each department receive a copy to ensure policy compliance and thus the effective and efficient management of the University's records.

6.2.2 Relationship between records management and corporate governance at WSU

6.2.2.1 Transparency and accountability

The study discovered that WSU, as a semi government entity, demonstrated transparency and accountability at the time of the investigation. This practice may have evolved from lessons learned during the time when the institution was placed under administration because of poor governance, which was one of the problems revealed during the assessment by the Department

of Higher Education and Training in April 2011 (Staff Reporter, 2011, p. 1). The call was for the administration to strengthen structures, systems, and policies to ensure good governance and restore the academic credibility, reliability, and dependability of the University. Therefore, the results suggested that WSU had improved its records management because when records are properly managed, they become a powerful tool for accelerating transparency and accountability, which leads to good governance, (Chinyemba 2011, Chinyemba and Ngulube 2005).

This result is consistent with that of Khoza's (2015) study of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Pietermaritzburg campus, which found effective corporate governance at the institution. Transparency and accountability due to efficient records management ensure corporate responsibility and effective governance and minimise maladministration and corruption.

6.2.2.2 Inclusion of stakeholders

The study found that including stakeholders in records management was not prioritised at WSU. In a study about the interaction between records management and information governance, Saffady (2016) found that a shared mission of organisational interests is a significant facilitator of effective corporate governance because it encourages interaction, cooperation, and consultation amongst stakeholders. Without communication and coordination, a particular stakeholder may formulate policies, make choices, or implement strategies that have a negative impact on other stakeholders, which may result in unforeseen implications in an organisation. Therefore, as maintained by De Mingo and Cerrillo-i-Martínez (2018) participating in records management through representation on a records management committee, for example, would increase transparency, accountability and effective corporate governance.

6.2.2.3 Compliance with legislation

The results of the analysis of the responses to the questionnaire revealed that WSU was compliant with legislation on records management, which was contrary to the results of Ngulube and Chinyemba's (2005) study of records management at UKZN, Pietermaritzburg Campus, which revealed that staff had limited knowledge of the legislation on access to information, which was, therefore, not implemented. Legislation requires institutions to manage their records efficiently and if records cannot be located or accessed because of poor records management, universities may not only suffer reputational damage and face legal repercussions but also no longer be able to demonstrate transparency or be held accountable. Records management is an

essential part of institutional governance.

6.2.2.4 Records management as essential to institutional governance

All but 1 respondent agreed that records management was essential to institutional governance. This implies that if all staff are aware of the need to comply with legislation and policy, records management would be central to the promotion of good governance (Mosweu & Rakemane, 2020). In other words, records management is the cornerstone of corporate governance and thus should be efficiently implemented. The fundamentals of good governance, such as transparency, accountability and compliance with legislation are ensured through efficient record management. Dikopoulou and Mihiotis (2012) concur with Mosweu and Rakemane (2020) that there is a strong connection between records management and good governance.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the research results, the following recommendations are made.

6.3.1 Awareness of records management policy

According to the findings of the study, not all WSU employees are aware of their university's records management policy. As a result, it is recommended that all University employees be made aware of the institution's records management policy because, as indicated by Makgahlela (2021), a records management policy serves as a guide for people working with records to ensure sound records management according to set standards. In addition, policy manuals need to be reviewed and updated regularly to keep abreast with the latest developments. During the review process, comments should be solicited from all stakeholders. Moreover, all the WSU records management manual, comprising the standard operating procedures, should be displayed on the institution's intranet for ease of access. Other ways of increasing awareness could be used, as indicated below in the section on standard operating procedures.

6.3.2 Awareness of standard operating procedures

As observed by Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013) the smooth operation of an efficient records management process is defeated if standard operating procedures are not in place. Clear instructions on the step-by-step processes, which should be followed at each stage of record management, need to be formulated in the policy document to ensure its implementation. The

standard operating procedures could be reinforced in workshops, at road shows and through constant messaging via email or the university intranet in the form of an institutional news flash.

6.3.3 *Establishment and awareness of records management committee*

As the respondents in the study said that they were unaware of the existence of a records management committee at WSU, it is recommended that one be established, or if there is one already, all office bearers should be made aware of it. A central place such as an institutional repository that is dedicated to all university policy documents, which could be easily accessed, could inform staff and stakeholders of records management committee meeting dates, agendas, minutes and decisions.

6.3.4 *Records security and accessibility*

Because respondents were concerned about record security and accessibility, it is advised that access restrictions like passwords, fingerprint recognition, or security mannered access control be implemented in storage facilities. An electronic document and records management system (EDRMS) is recommended to manage records throughout their life cycle, from production to disposal, to improve workflow effectiveness and sufficiency. This recommendation is linked to the dimensions of the records continuum model indicated by Spiteri (2012), which demonstrate records creation, capturing, pluralisation and organisation, with each dimension representing recordkeeping activities.

6.3.5 *Records management training*

As some participants were not sure of the training they had received, it is recommended that records management officers attend impactful and unforgettable types of training, such as workshops, seminars, and conferences hosted by various professional bodies, such as the South African Society of Archivists and other records management interest groups, and forums regularly to ensure their continuous professional development. Regular refresher training is recommended, and it should be included in the induction process for all new employees. Records personnel at all levels require appropriate training to revise old and learn new skills

and knowledge (Dikopoulou & Mihiotis, 2010). In addition, Mosweu and Rakemane (2020) propose that developing relevant educational materials and revamping curricula can address the shortcomings in graduate-level Archives and Records Management (ARM) education and training (Mosweu & Rakemane, 2020).

6.3.6 Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder participation, for example, through representation on the records management committee, should be compulsory. The Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000 (South Africa 2000) promotes the right of access to information and fosters a culture of transparency and accountability in South Africa. Records management with its enterprise-wide scope affects the responsibilities, interests, and activities of various stakeholders both within and outside of an organisation (Saffady, 2016). Records management should involve cooperation between stakeholders such as senior managers and staff of core business units, such as compliance, legal, Finance, information technology, risk management and human resources, for example. In the absence of this cooperation, a stakeholder may implement policies and procedures that may negatively affect records management. As mentioned above, a records management committee might provide a conducive environment for consultation and cooperation with other stakeholders.

6.3.7 Records management as an essential part of institutional governance

The study found that not all employees agreed that records management is an essential part of institutional governance. Therefore, to ensure the efficient and effective management of records throughout their life circle and to guarantee effective corporate governance, staff must be made aware of the central role of records management in institutional governance (Abdulrahman, 2015). This could be done using marketing mechanisms, such as frequent awareness campaigns to promote the benefits of records management, not only to create awareness in direct stakeholders but also the entire university (Legodi, 2011). The visibility of the records management policy and procedures unit is paramount for it to be known across the institution because it is difficult to know about and use something that is out of sight. In particular, those who create records should be sensitised to the role that they need to play in ensuring that the records created are effectively and efficiently managed.

6.4 Contribution of the study

This study has contributed to records management policy, practice, and research by determining the records management strategies, mechanisms, policies, and standard operating procedures at WSU. Moreover, it has determined the nexus between records management and effective corporate governance. Furthermore, the study contributed to an understanding of the records continuum and stakeholder theories as a basis for realising smooth, efficient records management systems, which serve the interests of stakeholders by ensuring transparency, accountability, and good governance in institutions such as WSU.

6.5 Limitations of the study

As the study was primarily concerned with the records management at WSU and its connection with effective corporate governance, it did not study all of the University's challenges, which might have impacted corporate governance. Moreover, as the study was limited to WSU, it may not be possible to generalise the results to other universities, although the results might be useful to them. In addition, the small number of participants whose data were included in the analysis might preclude generalising the results to all staff involved with records management at WSU, although the original sample size was adequate.

The research was limited to using a quantitative design using a survey questionnaire. Using interviews and focus group discussions would have led to triangulation and in-depth qualitative data in the study. However, the study was initiated during the COVID-19 period of lockdown, which would have prevented personal contact with respondents. Although online interviews and discussions would have been a possibility, it appeared that respondents struggled with virtual communication even in terms of emails.

6.5 Future research

Future research could do as follows:

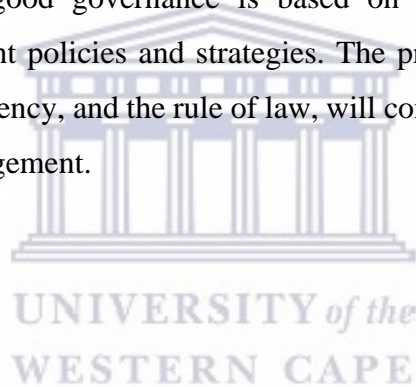
- Investigate other universities and even more than one, as was the case in the current study.
- Use a bigger sample for the questionnaire.
- Include interviews and focus group discussions.
- Explore the use of EDRMSs in South African universities and their impact on corporate governance.

6.6 Conclusion

The study determined the records management strategies, mechanisms, policies, and standard operating procedures at WSU. Moreover, it determined the nexus between records management and effective corporate governance at WSU. Records management is essential to the operation of any business since it involves a crucial resource. Therefore, appropriate strategies, mechanisms, policies and standard operating procedures need to be formulated, understood and implemented by staff to ensure transparency and accountability, and effective governance in an organisation.

Organisations can benefit from records management (especially if documents are stored virtually) in terms of risk reduction, as proper records provide evidence for an organisation's actions and decisions when faced with accusations of non-compliance, disaster recovery, public relations catastrophes, discrete information breaches, and security threats.

According to the literature, good governance is based on the implementation of well-formulated records management policies and strategies. The principles of good governance, such as accountability, transparency, and the rule of law, will continue to be promoted at WSU through efficient records management.



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APPENDICES



Appendix A: Participant's consent form



Consent Form

Research Title: Records management as a constituent of corporate governance in higher education institutions: a case study of Walter Sisulu University.

Researcher: Gugulethu Ndenge

Please tick the boxes

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet explaining the above research project, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw, I may contact the lead researcher at any time).
3. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result from the research.
4. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.
5. I agree to take part in the above research project.

Name of Participant

Date

Signature (*or legal representative*)

Name of person taking consent

Date

Signature

(If different from the lead researcher)

Gugulethu Ndenge

25 November 2021



Researcher

Date

Signature

Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.

UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

Appendix B: Questionnaire

Records management as a constituent of corporate governance in higher education institutions: a case study of Walter Sisulu University

Questionnaire:

Section A: Biographical Data

1 Gender

Female	
Male	

2 Your position within the Institution

Exam Officer	
Admission Officer	
Legal	
Secretariate	
Records Management	
Human resources	
Finance	
Registrar's Office	

3 What is your highest level of education?

Certificate	
Diploma	
Degree	
Masters	
Doctorate	

Section B: Records management at WSU

4 Does WSU have the following strategies and mechanisms in place for their records management? Please tick

	Yes	No
Records Management Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Records Management Strategy

Standard Operation Procedures

Filing system

6 Does the institution have a records management committee?

Yes

No

In your opinion, is the records management unit effective in providing guidance in the management of institutional records?

.....
.....

Have you attended any in-house training on records management?

Yes

No

Does the institution have a secured storage area for its records?

Yes

No

Are records in your institution easily retrievable and accessible by all stakeholders when needed for institutional business?

Yes

No



Section C: The relationship between records management and corporate governance at WSU

6 Does your records management programme enable transparency and accountability?

Yes

No

Does your records management programme demonstrate compliance with relevant legislation such as the Promotion of Access to Information Act and the Protection of Personal Information Act?

Yes

No

Does your records management programme ensure the security of information in its records? If yes, how is the access controlled?

.....
.....

Does your records management team promote stakeholder participation in records management programmes? If yes, please explain how?

.....
.....

Is records management considered an essential part of institutional governance?

Yes

No



Appendix C: Permission to conduct a study at the Walter Sisulu University



DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND RESEARCH
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

*Nelson Mandela Drive
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MTHATHA 5117
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*Buffalo City
Potsdam Campus
EAST LONDON
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06 August 2021

Mr Gugulethu Ndenge
Cape Peninsula University of Technology
Records & Archives Management
BELVILLE
7535

Dear Mr Ndenge

Gatekeepers Permission Letter to conduct research at Walter Sisulu University

Ethical Clearance Number: HS20/6/37
Institution: Walter Sisulu University

A Gatekeeper Letter is hereby granted for the study "**Records management as a constituent of corporate governance in higher education institutions: a case study of Walter Sisulu University**" provided that copies of your completed study will be submitted to the Campus Rector of the campus in which the study will be conducted and the Directorate of the Research & Innovation.

All data pertaining to Walter Sisulu University will be treated confidentially and you are required to abide by ethical principles at all times. It is your responsibility to seek consent from Participants.

Kind regards

Prof W Akpan
Senior Director: Research & Innovation

Walter Sisulu University

Appendix D: Permission to conduct a study from the University of the Western Cape



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE



16 September 2020
Mr G Ndenge
Library and Information Science
Faculty of Arts

Ethics Reference Number: HS20/6/37
Project Title: Records management as a constituent of corporate governance in higher education institutions: a case study of Walter Sisulu University.
Approval Period: 14 September 2020 – 14 September 2023

I hereby certify that the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape approved the methodology and ethics of the above-mentioned research project.

Any amendments, extensions or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval. Please remember to submit a progress report by 30 November each year for the duration of the project.

The permission to conduct the study must be submitted to HSSREC for record-keeping purposes.

The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia Josias'.

*Ms Patricia Josias
Research Ethics Committee
Officer University of the Western
Cape*

NHREC Registration Number: HSSREC-130416-049

Director: Research Development University of the Western Cape
Private Bag X 17 Bellville 7535
Republic of South Africa Tel: +27 21 959 4111
Email: research-ethics@uwc.ac.za

Appendix E: Email request to respondents to participate in the research

Dear Colleague,

My name is Gugulethu Ndenge, and I am a registered student in the Master in Library and Information Science programme at the University of the Western Cape (Student No. 95992045). My research topic is **Records management as a constituent of corporate governance in higher education institutions: a case study of Walter Sisulu University**. The research aims to determine the relationship between records management and corporate governance and determine how records are managed to enhance good corporate governance at Walter Sisulu University.

I am requesting 15-20 minutes of your time to fill in the attached questionnaire to facilitate the completion of my studies. The ethics clearance, the consent form, and the permission to conduct the research letters are attached for your convenience. Please save and e-mail the signed consent form and completed questionnaire to ndengeg@cput.ac.za.

The Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) is strictly adhered to in this research process and no personal details will be revealed when the research results are written up as a dissertation and/or published as an article.

Your assistance is much appreciated. Should you need any clarification, please feel free to contact me at ndengeg@cput.ac.za, or my supervisor, Dr Elisha Chiware, at chiwaree@cput.ac.za.

Yours sincerely

Gugulethu Ndenge

Appendix F: Editor's declaration



DR MAUREEN LILIAN KLOS
PROFESSIONAL EDITOR
BA; STD; BEd (*cum laude*); MEd (*cum laude*); DEd
Registered with the SAPEG (reg. no. KLO004)
maureenklos@gmail.com

EDITOR'S DECLARATION

I,

DR MAUREEN LILIAN KLOS,

Being the holder of the following qualifications:

BA; STD; BEd (*cum laude*); MEd (*cum laude*); DEd

Hereby certify that I am the English language editor of the following document:

RECORDS MANAGEMENT AS A CONSTITUENT OF CORPORATE GOVERNEMENT IN
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: A CASE STUDY OF WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY
(WSU)

by

GUGULETHU NDENGE

95992045

I hereby certify that I have edited the language, formatting and referencing in the above-mentioned document in their entirety. However, I assume no responsibility or liability for any post-editing errors or omissions.

7 November 2022